ISSN 0391-2108

Vol. LXIX
nuova serie

Fasc. 4
ottobre-dicembre 2016

Rivista di Letterature moderne e comparate

fondata da Carlo Pellegrini e Vittorio Santoli

Periodico trimestrale – POSTE ITALIANE SPA – Spedizione in Abbonamento Postale – D.L. 353/2003
conv. in L.27/02/2004 – n. 46 art.1, comma 1, DCB PISA – Aut. Trib. di Firenze n. 216/50 del 16/4/50

Pacini Editore

WORDS AS DOORS IN THE POETRY OF SEAMUS HEANEY AND GIORGIO CAPRONI[1]

"In the beginning was the Word"[2], *logos, verbum*: it is a very banal beginning, not for the world but for an article on the topic inspiring these pages. And nonetheless it is a relevant one and one that will prove to be useful later on.

Words have amazing powers, among which the power to open doors: suffice it to remember, for instance, Ali Baba's phrase "Open Sesame" in the story of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, or the role of passwords in military history since ancient times. In our everyday web-connected life, we constantly use them to open, not doors, but "windows". Used as a confirmation, or counterfeiting, of the "trespasser's" identity, words can open the virtual caves where we store personal information, financial resources, memories. In the next pages I will compare the poetics of Giorgio Caproni and Seamus Heaney through the prism of the "door" metaphor, which they both used to define the role of words.

In a lecture given to the Royal Society of Literature, Heaney commented as follows on the title of his second collection, *Door into the Dark*[3]:

> When I called my second book *Door into the Dark* I intended to gesture towards this idea of poetry as a point of entry onto the buried life of the feelings or as a point of exit for it. Words themselves are doors; Janus is to a certain extent their deity, looking back to a ramification of roots and associations and forward to a clarification of sense and meaning[4].

If words are doors, then they can open and connect, they can grant access to lands normally hidden and inaccessible. The door, Abraham Moles tells us in his *Psychologie de l'espace*, is a "paroi mobile qui change la topologie de l'accessible et de l'inaccesible, qui modifie d'un instant à l'autre l'idée de dedans et de dehors"[5]. Heaney's stance on the nature of poetry and the role of words as doors share the same spatial dynamics highlighted in this definition.

The title *Door into the dark* is taken from the first line ("All I know is a door into the dark") of the poem "The Forge", which depicts the work of poetry as the art of a blacksmith[6]. Hidden from the lights and traffic of everyday life, the blacksmith (the poet) "expends himself in shape and music" (line 9), "to beat real iron out, to work the bellows" (l. 14). Interestingly enough, the anvil on which the blacksmith forges "shape and music" is compared to an "altar" (l. 8), thus raising the manual labour to a sacred, mystical dimension and recalling the poem "The

Diviner", from Heaney's first collection *Death of a Naturalist*[7], where the art of poetry is compared to that of a rhabdomancer.

In the same lecture quoted above, the association between poet and diviner is made explicit by Heaney when drawing the careful distinction between "craft" and "technique" in the art of poetry. The figure of the diviner is here summoned to represent "pure technique":

> You can't learn the craft of dowsing or divining – it is a gift for being in touch with what is there, hidden and real [as "real" is the iron beaten out by the blacksmith], a gift for mediating between the latent resource and the community that wants it current and released. […] The diviner resembles the poet in his function of making contact with what lies hidden, and in his ability to make palpable what was sensed or raised[8].

The poet, part a blacksmith, part a diviner (to which we could at least add part a potato digger[9], part an archaeologist and part an anthropologist[10]), acts as a passer or a crosser or a carrier of meaning on the threshold between two universes. It is not by chance that his later collection *Seeing Things*[11] opens and closes with two *translations* (literary, the act of carrying a text from one language to another); nor it is accidental that the object of both translations are lines dealing with crossings between two worlds. Indeed, the collection is introduced by Heaney's version of "The Golden Bough" episode from book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid* and it is closed by a translation of Dante's lines narrating his crossing of the Acheron, guided by Virgil, in Canto III of *Inferno* (Heaney's title to the passage is "The Crossing"). Moreover, a twelve-poem section in the second part of the book goes under the title of "Crossings" (S. Heaney, *Seeing Things*, pp. 81-94).

Such a topography with the poet in the middle – a mediator on a threshold – informs several aspects of Heaney's poetics. For instance, when he comes to define the role of the poet in front of tradition, it is through a reinterpretation of Benjamin's Angel of History, which becomes the Angel of Poetry in the form of an oarsman on a boat:

> In order to propel himself and his craft forward, the oarsman must sit facing backward. In a similar fashion, the poet's craft requires the poet to take cognizance of all the poetry that lies behind him in order to devise another way forward. The poet must keep his future-oriented intelligence fully informed by the steadfastness of his backward look […]. Like the angel of history who, as Benjamin said, is dragged into the future while staring directly into the past, the angel of poetry is also subject to strains

that compel him in both directions[12].

A similar double, tensional structure also emerges when Heaney describes his own personal "birth" as a poet and, it is worth to underline it, as an Irish poet writing in English, a poet on the border between Irish and English traditions: "[…] my quest for definition, while it may lead backward, is conducted in the living speech of the landscape I was born into. If you like, I began as a poet when my roots crossed with my reading"[13].

It is rather revealing that when Heaney detects the same dual pattern at the basis of his personal – rather than poetical – identity, literally in the cradle, he does it by means of words and words pertaining at the very "living speech of the landscape [he] was born into". Mossbawn is the name of the Irish farm where the poet was born and spent his childhood, it is "[his] first place" as he wrote in an article[14] and it is the setting of at least half of the poems included in his first collection as well as of several other "memory poems" from later books[15]. After reporting the etymological origin of the place-name ("the planter's house on the bog"), Heaney proposes a different, suggestive interpretation according to which the second part of the toponym, "bawn", would be linked to the Gaelic word for white, "bán", via the local pronunciation of the morpheme. As a result, he says: "In the syllables of my home I see a metaphor of the split culture of Ulster", as if the toponym confirmed the geographical in-betweenness where the poet grew. "I was symbolically – he concludes – placed between the marks of English influence and the lure of the native experience, between 'the demesne' and 'the bog'"[16]. It is therefore not surprising that the place – metaphorically and literally – Heaney accords to the poet is, as we have seen, on the threshold between two worlds, moving back and forth, opening doors.

In order to give full insight into Heaney's perspective, we need to spend a few more words on the phrase "the living speech of the landscape" quoted above. In another essay whose title, rather significantly, reads "The Sense of Place", Heaney, following John Montague's formula, states that "[t]he whole of the Irish landscape […] is a manuscript which we have lost the skill to read"[17]. What he has done with the toponym Mossbawn is precisely a *reading* of this manuscript. The best example of such operation in verse form, although not the only one, is the poem "Anahorish" from *Wintering Out*[18], whose first line unveils the meaning of the Gaelic phrase "anach fhíor uisce" hidden behind the English colonial transliteration "anahorish": "My 'place of clear waters'"[19].

In Heaney's topographical etymology (or "poetymology", to use

Hart's clever portmanteau word)[20], the "living speech of the landscape" and the Angel's "backward look" meet. Heaney's revitalisation of the ancient Celtic tradition of "dinnseanchas" – that is "poems and tales which relate the original meaning of place names and constitute a form of mythological etymology"[21] – embodies the poetical manifestation of that "looking back to a ramification of roots and associations and forward to a clarification of sense and meaning" he referred to in the very first quotation on *Door into the Dark*.

Moreover, a very peculiar feature of the Irish landscape is the bogland, the marshy, soft ground Heaney mentions in opposition to the English "demesne". Heaney dedicated to this characteristic geological formation a series of poems known as the "bog poems"[22]. The first poem to deal with the topic and to develop what will become a central metaphor in *North*[23] is the closing poem of *Door into the Dark*, "Bogland". Here, for the first time, the bog is apprehended as the memory of the landscape, as Heaney himself declared: "So I began to get an idea of bog as the memory of the landscape, or as a landscape that remembered everything that happened in and to it"[24]. The link between bog and memory is particularly relevant when we acknowledge the crucial role that memory plays in Heaney's poetry: "[…] memory – he wrote – was the faculty that supplied me with the first quickening of my own poetry"[25].

In the soft turf of the bogland, bodies, objects, even butter sink[26], get buried, disappear from the surface of life and the flow of time, protected from the corruptive powers of light and oxygen, and reappear perfectly preserved centuries later, in the same way events and emotions dissolve from the conscious mind and can suddenly reemerge as a Proustian madeleine. To a poet who pays attention to their chtonic, latent vibrations, to a poet that masters the craft and technique to open doors, they will obviously reemerge in the form of poems:

> I have always listened for poems, they come sometimes like bodies come out of a bog, almost complete, seeming to have being laid down a long time ago, surfacing with a touch of mystery. They certainly involve craft and determination, but chance and instinct have a role on the thing too. I think the process is a kind of somnambulist encounter between masculine will and intelligence and feminine clusters of image and emotion[27].

We have now come full circle and can better understand the implications and ramifications of those first words of the Irish poet suggesting an "idea of poetry as a point of entry onto the buried life of the feelings or as a point of exit for it". Such a poetics entails words acting as

doors and a poet on their threshold as the god Janus or, slightly shifting the metaphor – removing the roof, making the sill a boundary stone – as the god Terminus standing "on the central stepping stone"[28] to which Heaney dedicated a later poem included in *The Haw Lantern*. "Poetry – Heaney stated in his well-known essay "The Government of the Tongue" – is more a threshold than a path […]"[29].

But not all doors honour what they promise: some of them do not open or, even worse, even more *diabolically*, once opened, lead nowhere. It is the case of Caproni's use of the "words as doors" metaphor, as it emerges from the poem "La porta", an extremely dense and rarefied poem at the same time, a labyrinthine one (even visually) precisely as the door it depicts:

…….La porta
bianca…
La porta
che, dalla trasparenza, porta
nell'opacità….

La porta
condannata…

La porta
cieca, che reca
dove si è già, e divelta
resta biancomurata
e intransitiva…

L'amorfa
porta che conduce ottusa
e labirintica (chiusa
nel suo spalancarsi) là
dove nessuna entrata
può dar àdito…
[…]
La porta
morgana:

la Parola[30].

We are facing the exact opposite of Heaney's door, both from a spatial and lexical perspective: Heaney's door leads into the dark with the scope of "a *clarification* of sense and meaning" (*italics mine*); this door, on the contrary, is "white" and leads "from transparency into opacity", it

opens onto nowhere but "where you already are", just as these five doors ("porta" repeated five times at the end of the line) that keep opening on the white wall of the page and leading back to the beginning of the line. If Heaney's door is a symbol of communication and permeability and is meant for crossing, Caproni's is bricked up, walled and intransitive: literally, not allowing any passing. As a devil's trick, it closes in the very moment it is opened, thus acting as an architectural variation on the "Asparizioni"[31] motif, which is at the centre of the section from *Il conte di Kevenhüller* that goes under the same title *Asparizioni* and includes the poem "La porta"[32]. In the end, Caproni's door is illusory as the optical effect to which "morgana" refers: it distorts the object it was meant to show.

In the four-line poem "Le parole" from his previous collection *Il franco cacciatore* (1982), Caproni had already warned his readers on the deceptive nature of words:

> Le parole. Già.
> Dissolvono l'oggetto.
>
> Come la nebbia gli alberi,
> il fiume: il traghetto[33].

Words, then, veil and conceal. Even worse, they dissolve the object, melting its very substance away into a foggy whiteness: they bring indistinctness where they meant to define. The colon in the final line seems to behave likewise: a comma would have introduced a further element to the list of the vanishing presences; the colon, instead, lengthens the prosodic pause, isolating the final element in a structural specularity which connects it with the first isolated term of the poem ("le parole"), and announces an explanation that actually blurs the apparently plain interpretation of the text. The ferry, the symbol of the possible crossing – suffice it to recall the role of Charon, "the ferryman of that livid marsh"[34] in Heaney's translation of Dante – not only dissolves with the trees and the river, but also, via its association with "the words", participates in the disappearance of the "object" with which it rhymes. What was supposed to ferry, to carry through and beyond to the other side ("traghettare": latin *trans-iactare*, literally to throw across, beyond), seems rather to diabolically separate, divide, to obstruct by throwing in between: the "tra-ghetto" becomes a "*dia-bolon*" (from the Greek *diaballein*).

Caproni's door is not on a threshold but at a border, a multifarious, protean, inconsistent, deceptive border on which the poet will keep ban-

ging throughout his collections from the 1975 *Il muro della terra* (see, for instance, "Falsa indicazione": "'Confine', diceva il cartello. / Cercai la dogana. Non c'era. / Non vidi, dietro il cancello, / ombra di terra straniera.")[35] to the posthumous *Res amissa* (1991; see "La barriera": "Quello che tu, mio vecchio, / scorgi oltre frontiera / è quanto è qua. / La barriera / – non te ne accorgi? – è uno specchio")[36].

If in Heaney's perspective, the poet is by definition a trespasser, for Caproni he is an "expatriate", an "exiled", as is revealed by the title ("Lo spatriato") of the poem following "Le parole": he has been carried away from the place of his mother-tongue; he is in foreign land. He asks, he gropes, he cries: nothing, "[p]eggio – the poem ends – che se fosse muto"[37].

"In the beginning was the Word" we said at the beginning of this paper. For Caproni, if in the beginning was the word, what came right after is exile: an exile caused by words. The poet's exiled condition is, in fact, shared by all human beings, as he explained in an essay:

> Sta di fatto che Adamo, dando un valore conoscitivo al verbum, cioè inventando il linguaggio logico, si creò nelle parole i campi del suo esilio e della sua servitù – si perdette nella foresta delle parole (nella selva oscura) senza possibilità, forse, di risalire il dilettoso colle[38].

The philosophical and poetical implications brought about by such a view, according to which at the core of human nature stands an exile in the realm of logos, are vast. As Caproni himself explained in an interview, his ideal would be "[…] andare oltre la parola, perché nella parola (e anche questo l'ho detto, ridetto e lo ripeto) vedo un limite, vedo un muro, c'è anche il muro della parola…". His aim was "[…] arrivare al pensiero puro, senza la contaminazione della parola, come in modo esemplare è arrivato Beethoven con quel *Molto adagio*" (the poet is alluding to the third movement of opus 132)[39].

Unfortunately, that ceaseless rapping on the last frontier can't be but by means of words, that is, according to Caproni, by means of logos. The poet's investigation, as he explained in the same interview, begins precisely where logic and rational thinking hit their limits. There the poet stands, on the border of logos, unrelentingly trying to cross it. Beyond the border, stretch what Caproni calls "i luoghi non giurisdizionali", the "non jurisdictional lands":

> Io sono un razionalista che pone limiti alla ragione, e cerco, cerco. Che cosa non lo so, ma so che il destino di qualsiasi ricerca è imbattersi nel

> "Muro della terra" oltre il quale si stendono i "luoghi non giurisdizionali", dove la ragione non ha più vigore al pari di una legge fuori del territorio in cui vige. Questi confini esistono: sono i confini della scienza; è da lì che comincia la ricerca poetica. Non so se *aldilà* ci sia *qualcosa*; sicuramente c'è l'inconoscibile[40].

Obviously the myth of the fall of man tells also another kind of exile: that is the exile into time, into the irreversible passing of time. Caproni's harsh, cold law of logic extends its domain onto time: it becomes chrono-logy. "Fa freddo nella storia", he wrote in the poem "Proposito" from *Il franco cacciatore*[41], and later on, in "Corollario" (*Il conte di Kevenhüller*): "La Storia è testimonianza morta. / E vale quanto una fantasia"[42]. Which, in the posthumous *Res amissa*, will turn into the "sad thought" ("pensiero triste") that "[l]a storia non esiste"[43]. The extreme, drastic logic of chronology is that everything will disappear, everything will dissolve in the same way words dissolve the object. Another example from *Il conte di Kevenhüller* reads: "Nella memoria / degli altri, resterà una storia / – bianca – mai esistita"[44].

If Heaney's memory is a bog that hides, preserves and releases, Caproni's is a gradually vanishing forest: "[…] non mi resta / che il ricordare: una / vanescente foresta"[45]. If Heaney's *dinnseanchas* give access to the manuscript of the landscape and unearths its hidden memory, Caproni's toponyms lead to a place called "Nibergue"[46], which is the French argot word for "nothing" used by Céline, who Caproni had translated into Italian in 1964[47].

Human logos and time's logos (chronology) act in the same way: they erase things and it is precisely in this very act of dissolving that they meet in Caproni's poetics, as the final lines of "Il vetrone" ("The glaze"), from *Il muro della terra*, dramatically show (and *not* say): "[…] "Babbo, / tutti non facciamo altro / – tutti – che "[48]. What do we all do, in the end? The very word that was supposed to reveal it, has dissolved leaving the poem's door open, torn off, showing a thick, "white-walled and intransitive" fog hingeing at the full stop.

Words, in the end, are difficult things to grasp and define and nobody knows it better than poets. The main reason is, I reckon, that they are at the same time the tool and the object that the tool tries to analyse. But also I suppose that a fair, although extremely general, basis we can agree on, is that they are symbols. "Symbol", of course, is a word itself (the evidence of the thorny land we have been moving through), from *sym* – plus *ballein*: literally to throw together, to bring together, to unite. But words, Caproni's showed us, can also be the exact opposite: a

diabolon, the obstacle that is thrown in between, separating instead of uniting, concealing what it was supposed to display.

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[1] This article was written with the support of a postdoctoral fellowship from the *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* (Portugal).

[2] *Gospel of John*, 1:1.

[3] Seamus Heaney, *Door into the Dark*, London, Faber and Faber, 1969.

[4] S. Heaney, *Feeling into Words*, in S. Heaney, *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London, Faber and Faber, 1980, p. 52.

[5] Abraham A. Moles and Elisabeth Rohmer, *Psychologie de l'espace*, Paris, Casterman, 1972, p. 38.

[6] The association between poetry and smithery has a long tradition in literary history, dating back at least to fifth-century b.C. Greece, according to Giacomo Lombardo, and it would probably be worth a detailed study (see Giacomo Lombardo, *Omero e le origini della critica letteraria*, in Willem J. Verdenius, *I principî della critica letteraria greca*, Modena, Mucchi Editore, 2003, p. 21). Among the most renowned examples, it will suffice here to mention Eliot's epigraph to *The Waste Land*, "For Ezra Pound: il miglior fabbro", that echoed Dante's portrait of the troubadour Arnaut Daniel in the words of Guido Guinizzelli's shadow: "fu miglior fabbro del parlar materno" (*Purgatorio*, XXVI, l. 117: "was best smith of the mother tongue").

[7] S. Heaney, *Death of a Naturalist*, London, Faber and Faber, 1966.

[8] S. Heaney, *Feeling into Words*, pp. 47-48. The distinction between "craft" and "technique" is made explicit a few lines above.

[9] I am alluding to Heaney's famous poem "Digging", which is the opening to *Death of a Naturalist* and whose last lines resonate with the tone of a poetical manifesto: "Between my finger and my thumb / The squat pen rests. / I'll dig with it" (ll. 29-31).

[10] Helen Vendler has brilliantly highlighted these different "natures" of the poet in her volume *Seamus Heaney* (Harvard, Harvard University Press, 2000; 1st ed.: London, HarperCollins, 1998). See in particular chapter 2, "Archaeologies: *North*" (pp. 38-57), and chapter 3, "Anthropologies: *Field Work*" (pp. 58-77). It will be noted that as multifarious as they can be, all these metaphors point in the direction of "what lies hidden".

[11] S. Heaney, *Seeing Things*, London, Faber and Faber, 1991.

[12] S. Heaney, *Us as in Versus. Poetry and the World, in In forma di parole: Seamus Heaney poeta dotto*, a cura di G. Morisco, quarta serie, n. 2, aprile-giugno 2007, p. 175.

[13] S. Heaney, Belfast, in *Preoccupations*, pp. 36-37.

[14] S. Heaney, Mossbawn, in *Preoccupations*, p. 18.

[15] In her analysis of the part "Squarings" of Heaney's *Seeing Things*, Helen Vendler pointed out: "Because landscape is for Heaney a powerful repository of memory, many 'Squarings' represent returns as a conscious adult to some scene from youth [...]" (H. Vendler, *Seamus Heaney*, p. 138).

[16] S. Heaney, *Belfast*, p. 35.

[17] S. Heaney, *The Sense of Place*, in *Preoccupations*, p. 132.

[18] S. Heaney, *Wintering Out*, London, Faber and Faber, 1972.

[19] For a penetrating interpretation of the linguistic stratification behind the poem and against a plain, nostalgic, identitarian correspondence between land and language, see O'Brien's *Seamus Heaney and the Place of Writing* (Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 2002), chapter 2: "Lost Unhappy and at Home. Mossbawn, Broagh, Anahorish – *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich*" (in particular, p. 55 ff.). It is also worth reporting Heaney's words on the townland of Anahorish: "From

the beginning I was very conscious of boundaries. There was a drain or stream, the Sluggan drain, an old division that ran very close to our house. It divided the townland of Anahorish and those two townlands belonged to two different parishes, Bellaghy and Newbridge, which are also in two different dioceses: the diocese of Derry ended at the Sluggan drain, and the diocese of Armagh began. I was always going backwards and forwards. […] I seemed always to be a little displaced; being in between was a kind of condition, from the start" (quoted in Neil Corcoran, *Seamus Heaney*, London, Faber and Faber, 1986, p. 16).

[20] Henry Hart, *Seamus Heaney: Poet of Contrary Progression*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1992; in particular, chapter 3: "Poetymologies", pp. 49-73.

[21] S. Heaney, *The Sense of Place*, p. 131.

[22] The poems generally going under this label include: "Bogland" from *Door into the Dark*; "The Tollund man" and "Nerthus" from *Wintering Out*; "Bone Dreams", "Come to the Bower", "Bog Queen", "Punishment", "The Grauballe Man", "Kinship", "Strange Fruit" and "Belderg" from *North*.

[23] S. Heaney, *North*, London, Faber and Faber, 1975.

[24] S. Heaney, *Feeling into Words*, p. 54.

[25] S. Heaney, *Feeling into Words*. Ibidem.

[26] See S. Heaney, "Bogland", *Door into the Dark*, ll. 13-15: "Butter sunk under / More than a hundred years / Was recovered salty and white."

[27] S. Heaney, *Belfast*, p. 34.

[28] S. Heaney, "Terminus III", l. 6, in S. Heaney, *The Haw Lantern*, London, Faber and Faber, 1987.

[29] S. Heaney, *The Government of the Tongue, in The Government of the Tongue: The 1986 T.S. Eliot Memorial Lectures and Other Critical Writings*, London, Faber and Faber, 1988, p. 108.

[30] Giorgio Caproni, "La porta", *Il conte di Kevenüller*, Milano, Garzanti, 1986; now in Giorgio Caproni, L'opera in versi, edizione critica a cura di Luca Zuliani, Milano, "I Meridiani" Mondadori, 1998, pp. 609-610.

[31] The word "asparizione" is a portmanteau word created by Caproni, blending "apparition" (or "appearance" in the sense of "materialization", of something appearing, becoming visible) and "disappearance": "[s]ignifica apparizione e sparizione insieme" (G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 1584), as Caproni himself wrote in a gloss to the poem "Asparizione" (*Il franco cacciatore*, Milano, Garzanti, 1982; in G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 407). A possible, rather faithful although less suggestive, English translation could be "(dis)appearance". Certainly, also the word "aspirazione" ("aspiration, yearning") reverberates in Caproni's neologism but it can hardly be considered one of the two primary elements of the blending, as suggested by John Taylor (John Taylor, *Into the Heart of European Poetry*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 2010, p. 54).

[32] See G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, pp. 601-622.

[33] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 460.

[34] S. Heaney, *Seeing Things*, "The Crossing", pp. 111-113, l. 17 (translation of Dante, Inferno, Canto III).

[35] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 281.

[36] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 810.

[37] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 461, l. 8.

[38] G. Caproni, *La precisione dei vocaboli ossia la Babele*, "La Fiera Letteraria", 22 maggio 1947; now in G. Caproni, *La scatola nera*, Milano, Mondadori, 1996, p. 22. The "selva oscura" is a clear reference to Dante's *Inferno*, canto I.

[39] G. Caproni,*"Era così bello parlare." Conversazioni radiofoniche con Giorgio Caproni*, Genova, Il nuovo melangolo, 2002, p. 229.

[40] Quoted in G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 1537.

[41] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 515, l. 1.

[42] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 562, ll. 3-4.

[43] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 915.

[44] "Curriculum, o: in umor nero", in G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 656, ll. 3-5.

[45] "Foresta", Il franco cacciatore, in G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 472, ll. 6-8.

[46] "Nibergue", Il muro della terra, in G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, p. 336.

[47] Louis Ferdinand Céline, *Morte a credito*, Milano, Garzanti, 1964.

[48] G. Caproni, *L'opera in versi*, pp. 294-5, ll. 29-31.